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Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada
Canada

P.N.E.U. NOTES.

Edited by Miss F. Noël Armfield, *Sec.*, 26, *Victoria Street, S.W.*
Tel. 479 *Victoria.*

To whom all Hon. Local Secs. are requested to send reports of all matters of interest connected with their branches, also 6 copies of any prospectuses or other papers they may print.

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NEW BRANCHES.

The Executive Committee has been approached with a view to starting Branches in the following places :—

Cardiff.—Names may be sent to Mrs. Hamilton, Blackladies, Dynas Powis.

Dunfermline.—Mrs. Beveridge, Pitreavie, Dunfermline, would be glad to hear from people interested.

Manchester.

Swansea.

Readers of the *Parents' Review* living in these districts, or having friends there, are asked to communicate with Miss Armfield, 26, Victoria Street, S.W.

Belgravia.—A meeting was held at 5, St. James' Square (by kind invitation of Viscountess Enfield), and our branch representative, Lady Campbell, spoke on "The Aims and Work of the P.N.E.U." There were forty-eight present, principally new members and non-members, and Lady Campbell began by saying that the training of children was one of the most intricate problems, and can only be carried on by their parents. It is a vocation, and like other vocations must be informed by knowledge. She then went on to show how the P.N.E.U. helped mothers and fathers at all the stages of training. The audience was very appreciative, and eight new members joined.

LONDON NATURAL HISTORY CLUB.

(*Managed by the Belgravia Branch.*)

Feb. 8th.—The Club was assembled by the kind invitation of Col. and Mrs. Tufnell, at 46, Eaton Square, at 3 p.m., to hear Professor Beddard speak on "The Zoological Gardens as an Educational Agent." Col. Tufnell in the chair. Professor Beddard began by saying that it was impossible in so short a time to do more than give one or two suggestions and generalisations which might be worked out with advantage during our coming expeditions to the Zoo.

(1) Modification of structure in accordance with mode of life. He took his example among the mammalia, who were modified to a fresh-water or marine existence. First voles, then otters, then the sea-lion, till the modification is almost complete and the fish-like form is attained in the whales.

(2) Groups of animals rise, flourish and decay. The Professor took the instance from the marsupial group, which once no doubt was the first family of mammals, and covered all the earth, and is now pressed back into the corners of Australia and North and South America. He bade the audience watch evolution directing the fauna of the world from behind, or some mysterious force pressing them along a given road.

Feb. 14th.—The first of the expeditions conducted by Mr. Finn through the Zoological Gardens was taken. A party of twenty-eight assembled on an ideal winter's day, and a most charming description of "Cats, small and great," was given by Mr. Finn, the cats themselves, including a lion cub of four months old, seemed to take the liveliest interest in the proceedings,

and roared so loud that it was sometimes difficult to hear Mr. Finn's voice. He gave a vivid and succinct account of the lions, lionesses, tigers, panthers, jaguars, pumas, leopards, ocelots, servalines, etc.

Bristol.—The fourth lecture of the session took place at University College, on Jan. 15th, when Mr. George Hall Leonard lectured on "Children's Pictures." Mr. Bligh Bind presided. Mr. Leonard's witty and interesting paper was much enjoyed by the members. He traced the gradual development of book-illustrating for children, showed quaint examples of early work. He pleaded for colour in children's pictures, especially those hung in the children's rooms. He wished that the Bristol Art Gallery could follow the example of the Ancoats Gallery in Manchester, where a room was set aside for children in which the pictures of all time definitely intended to appeal to them, could be exhibited. Mr. Leonard also spoke of the advantages of well-illustrated school books, and the relation of art to religion.

Brondesbury and Kilburn.—On Jan. 25th, "Are we Degenerating ?" The paper was introduced with a reference to the fact that, in 1905, it was reported that sixty per cent. of the recruits for the British Army were rejected as "unfit ;" to the appointment of an Inter-departmental Committee to enquire into and report on the subject of physical deterioration. The reader then expressed the opinion that, so far as the mass of the population is concerned, we are deteriorating and that we shall continue to do so unless we mend our ways, and that the remedy was in our own hands. The various factors influencing us were then discussed, the sound stock from which we spring was held to be in our favour, that environment played its part, but was of less importance than evolution. In support of this, discussions of the British Medical Association were quoted. Foods and their varied values were then discussed, and tables shown giving the very great increase there had been in the amount of meat imported during the last fifty years, and how much the consumption of tea had increased. Attention was called to the fact that quality as well as kind is of great importance in food. Much good was anticipated by the elementary schools being now under the Sanitary Authorities, as the health of the children was being better cared for. The incidence of the declining birth-rate was emphasised as likely to increase the proportion of the unfit, as was also our many philanthropic institutions. The marriage of the unfit, the increase of pauperism and insanity, were in turn touched upon, and the paper was concluded by an expression of opinion that the remedy is that all classes must be taught to better understand the science and art of living.

Croydon.—At a meeting of this branch, held at Shirley House (by kind permission of Mrs. Laing), the Headmaster of the Whitgift School, Mr. Andrews, delivered an interesting address on the "Preparatory Education of Boys." Mr. Andrews said that the education of boys under twelve, was the best outstanding problem of education. He then read Hazlitt's amusing description of the old classical education and its effects, and said that his own preparatory education had consisted of Latin (chiefly grammar), Greek and mathematics, and contended that there were still thousands of preparatory schools conducted on these lines. He then said that there were four objections to this class of education. (1) It is all substructive, all foundation, learning of things which *may* be of use years hence, but generally are of no use afterwards. Therefore it is based on false metaphor, for education is not an edifice, but a growth, it should grow as a sapling grows into a tree, but should always be complete in itself at all stages of its growth. (2) It is unreal, always treats of the abstract not the concrete. (3) It neglects the law of development, young children could not grasp abstract subjects,

their minds had not reached that stage. There was a stage in which fairy tales, myths and concrete objects appealed to children. The imagination is all important, but it must have a foot-hold in reality and experience. Hence necessity for the concrete. Therefore French is a better language than Latin for young children to learn, because it is spoken and has a familiar subject matter. (4) It asks too receptive an attitude, it does not require sufficient activity, young children should learn by doing things; learn measures by measuring points of the compass by observation, etc. At the close of the paper there was some discussion, Dr. Parsons Smith saying how entirely he agreed with the lecturer, while Mrs. Hall pointed out that the P.N.E.U. existed to correct the errors in education which Mr. Andrews had dwelt on, and had been working for the last twelve years, with most happy effects on lines similar to those he had indicated. Miss Leaky said she thought we were much indebted to the kindergarten for being the first to voice this reform movement in education. Mr. Letts and Dr. Franklin Parsons also took part in the discussion, and the meeting closed with thanks to the lecturer.

Darlington.—At Mewden, on Dec. 15th, with Mr. E. L. Pease in the chair, Miss Katherine Pease read a paper on "Present-day Nerves." The lecturer stated that in these days, when the complexity and interests of life have increased a hundredfold, it was necessary to face the fact that we were throwing a corresponding strain on the nervous system of both children and grown up people. No doubt a certain amount of brain work was healthy, and education could so strengthen the mental powers as greatly to enlarge their capacity, at the same time it was essential to realize that by such stimulation, the nerves were being made from a blunt instrument into a delicate one, and must be treated accordingly. In the first place a deliberate effort should be made by physical means to keep them in a healthy condition; with the strenuous life of to-day we require more rest, sleep and recreation than did our forefathers, the overwork and nervous breakdowns, so frequently met with, ought to be preventible, while children should be allowed plenty of leisure time in which to develop, and not live continually at the strain, either in work or amusement. In the second place it was essential to struggle for mental control over our nerves, and not allow ourselves to consider them beyond our mastery. Special stress was laid on the importance of encouraging children to conquer their nervous fears and idiosyncracies, and thus acquire self-control. The lecturer concluded by pointing out that the object of considering the nerves was to secure that, by having them in good health and order, we might better be able to forget their existence and proceed unhampered to do our work in the world.

Derby.—The secretaries of this branch have felt that there has been a much better attendance and much more enthusiasm shown throughout the year 1905, at the various meetings. A very interesting visit for the children with their parents was made to Mr. Wilkin's paper mills, and the whole process of designing and printing wall papers was shown to them. In March, Professor Keeble gave a botanical demonstration on the "Buds of Trees," showing how they were wrapped up and protected during the winter, ready to burst and develop in the spring.—Mrs. Franklin (Organizing Secretary of the Bayswater branch) kindly opened the autumn session by an address on "What the P.N.E.U. does for its Members." The special point she dwelt on was the importance of training and educating oneself for the bringing up of children. Young mothers especially, have an idea that all this knowledge comes by instinct, but older women often look back and realize that, like many other things, they would have been much more fitted for the difficulties that arise had they gone

through something like an apprenticeship beforehand.—In November, Mrs. Mumford, M.A. (of Manchester), gave a paper on "The Development of the Will in Early Childhood," and a very brisk discussion followed which lasted nearly as long as the interesting paper had done. In December, Dr. Howarth (Medical Officer of Health) addressed us on "Various Sanitary Considerations affecting Children of School Age." This meeting was held at Belmont (by kind permission of Miss Adams), and was much appreciated. —*Holiday Excursion.* During the holidays visits were paid to the Electric Works of the town, and also to the Fire Station. By the kindness and courtesy of the Chief Constable the men were allowed to show and explain to a large number of children and adults, the rapid process by which horses and engines are at work as soon as an alarm of fire is given. They were brought out attached to hose, and water pumped on to a disused building. The life-saving apparatus was shown and demonstrations made, by men and boys jumping from windows into sheets held for them, and by using fire escapes, etc. The Borough Electrical Engineer then conducted the party round the Electric Light Works, and was most kind in showing various electrical instruments and demonstrations.

Dulwich.—Last November, Mr. Richard Kearton gave a delightful lecture on "Wild Nature's Ways," in the hall of the Dulwich High School for Girls (by kind permission of Miss Silcox). Mr. Gilkes, the Master of Dulwich College, occupied the chair. The lecture was profusely illustrated by lantern slides, many of which were of unique interest. It was well attended and much enjoyed by all present. On Jan. 24th, at The Grove (by kind permission of Mrs. Carson Roberts), Mr. Carson Roberts being in the chair, a very interesting paper on "Nursery Education," was read by Dr. Newman Neild. Among many other capital points, he was emphatic on the importance of giving the children of the best, especially in music and pictorial art, and in accustoming them to appreciate and respect what was good. His paper was listened to with great interest, and a pleasant discussion followed, which Dr. Neild conducted most genially and ably.

Glasgow.—The third lecture of the session was delivered by Mdlle. de Nys, on Feb. 1st, at 15, Woodside Terrace (by kind permission of Mrs. R. S. Allan). The address, which was in French, took the form of a short "appreciation" of Racine, with *lecture expressive* of scenes from "Andromaque." Mdlle. de Nys described Racine as one of the greatest men who have shed a lustre on France. His characters are essentially human, their hearts beat, their voices ring true. He excels in the portraiture of women, their caprices, their changeableness, their delicacy of feeling. Hermione, in "Andromaque" is tenderness, love and passion as they had never before appeared on the French stage. Love and hatred inextricably mingled, compose her being. A short *resumé*, of the plot of "Andromaque," was rendered intensely fascinating by Mdlle. de Nys' wonderful elocutionary gifts, which held her audience spell-bound.

Hyde Park and Bayswater.—Hon. Sec., Mrs. E. L. Franklin, 50, Porchester Terrace, Hyde Park. "At Home" Thursday mornings, or by appointment. On Jan. 31st, at 98, Harley Street, W. (by kind permission of Mrs. Morley Fletcher), A. Somervell, Esq., Mus. Doc., read a paper on "The Right Basis of a Musical Education." There was a good attendance and members greatly appreciated it. Those who were not present will look forward to reading it in one of the monthly magazines. Meetings were held on Jan. 24th, and Feb. 13th, with readings from the "Home Education Series," by Lady Campbell and Mrs. Rayner Batten. Good discussions followed the reading.

RICHMOND.—On Wednesday, Jan. 31st, at the Old Palace (by kind permission of Mrs. Scott), Dr. Maguire gave an interesting lecture on "Senses and Morals." The lecture led to much discussion, in which the chairman, Professor Mcleod, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Scott and Mr. Scott all joined.

SALISBURY.—A most interesting and suggestive lecture was given on Dec. 5th, by the Rev. D. Datchelor on "Children's Imaginative Faculty." The lecture was admirable and was listened to throughout with the closest attention. Miss Douglas, in the absence of Mr. Tamart, who had been announced to preside, took the chair.

SURBITON.—The third meeting of this branch was held on Feb. 9th, at Mrs. Jeffcoat's, 12, Avenue Sumers, when Mrs. Clement Parsons lectured on "Simplicity." Miss Procter presided, and about sixty people were present. The lecturer described Simplicity as "a virtue and a fine art," and gave instances of it as an element in the character of great men, and in the greatest art of the world. The popular idea of simplicity as connected with privation or narrowness was combatted, and it was shown as indispensable in a "true conquest of life." Lack of simplicity in various directions at the present day was pointed out, and more solitude, more silence, more direct study of great literature, more restraint as regards household adornment were advised. The lecturer pointed out that children can be educated in this virtue only indirectly by the spirit in which they are brought up, but the value of direct methods of arousing imaginative interest in such subjects as history, science citizenship, was commented on. A lively discussion followed in which Dr. Goodman, Miss Bloxam, Mrs. Brough, Miss E. Burney, Mr. Stowell, took part. A hearty vote of thanks to Mrs. Parsons for her interesting and suggestive paper closed the meeting.

AUSTRALIA.

HAWTHORN SUB-BRANCH.—A meeting was held in the Presbyterian School Hall, on Nov. 3rd, at which the chair was taken by the Hon. George Swinburne, and a lecture was delivered by Mr. Frank Tate, M.A., the Director of Public Instruction, on "Educational Problems for Parents." The subject was treated with great charm and enthusiasm. In the course of his address Mr. Tate said that education should result in a generation of power. It should help the children to know and understand, to feel, and above and including all, give them a bias towards right living. The true home attempts this, the true school has the same ideal, and it is the imperative duty of parents to see that their children are attending such a school, and that they do not relax their endeavour to uphold this ideal at home. In the early stages of a child's life the work can scarcely be made too objective. His tasks should be vitalised by linking them to some reality in his own life. Mr. Tate referred to the vexed questions of home-lessons, and said that carried to excess the practice prevented home communion of interests, but that it might have valuable results in fostering self-reliance. In the primary schools it was directed that children below the third class should have home work sufficient to occupy not more than half-an-hour, and above the third class not more than one hour. Special reference was made to Professor James' psychology, as being of great practical helpfulness in the matter of children's training, and a stimulating lecture was made all the more effective by vivid descriptions of the way in which teachers of our own state are to-day attacking and solving in the happiest way, some of the problems of our children's education in its fourfold aspect—physical, emotional, mental and moral.

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ON THE CHOICE OF A SCHOOL.

BY ENNIS RICHMOND.

To most of us who are parents this difficulty, of choosing a school, comes sooner or later; some of us put off the consideration of it to the last minute, with some of us the question haunts us from the moment of the entrance of our children into the world. In some few cases the question hardly arises, for there are what one may call family schools—places to which the sons of this or that family have gone for generations, and to which it is understood that this or that particular boy will go. This could not be the case with preparatory schools until lately, for preparatory schools were hardly known fifty years ago; but nowadays the choice of a boy's preparatory school is, in the case of some families, as much a foregone conclusion as that of his public school.

But this condition of affairs as regards our children's schooling is not the usual one. To the majority of parents, the question of to what school to send their children, troubles them, more or less vaguely, all their early years, becoming acute as the child passes his sixth birthday or thereabouts.

We can discuss this matter more generally from the point of view of all children than would have been the case, say, ten or fifteen years ago, when it was an understood thing that school-life was necessary for boys only. Now girls go to school almost as much as boys and the question arises for them in almost as great an intensity as for their brothers.